DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 230 691 CE 036 049

AUTHOR Rist, Ray C.; And Others
TITLE Strategies for Coordinating Education and Employment Services: A Preliminary Analysis of Four In-School Alternatives. Occasional Paper #1.
INSTITUTION State Univ. of New York, Ithaca. Coll. of Human Ecology at Cornell Univ.; Youthwork, Inc., Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Nov 79
NOTE 67p.; For related documents, see ED 224 901-903 and CE 036 050-053.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescents; Career Education; Career Exploration; Credits; *Demonstration Programs; *Disadvantaged Youth; *Education Work Relationship; *Employment Programs; Federal Programs; Job Development; Job Training; *Program Implementation; Secondary Education; Work Experience Programs
IDENTIFIERS Private Enterprise; *Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act; Youthwork National Policy Study

ABSTRACT

Forty-eight of the Exemplary In-School Demonstration Projects being conducted under Title IV, Part A of the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (YEDPA) of 1977 were analyzed to (1) provide an initial discussion of some of the basic aspects of the various strategies employed by the projects and (2) assess some of the fundamental assumptions about the transition from school to work and the manner in which different strategies are thought to assist in that transition. During September 1978 to August 1979, projects were studied, and four broad strategies were identified. These strategies are expanded private sector involvement, career awareness, job creation through youth-operated projects, and academic credit for work experience. This report is a tentative outlining of the strategies and their variations, with no new data reported. It outlines the distinguishing characteristics of each of the broad strategies and the alternatives available within each approach, without providing conclusions about the merits of each. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED230691

STRATEGIES FOR COORDINATING EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES: A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF FOUR IN-SCHOOL ALTERNATIVES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

Ray C. Rist
Principal Investigator

Mary Agnes Hamilton
Wilfred B. Holloway
Steven D. Johnson
Heather E. Wiltberger

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R Rist

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE036049

OCCASIONAL PAPER #1

YOUTHWORK NATIONAL POLICY STUDY
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York
November, 1979

youthwork national policy study
n124 mvr hall
cornell university
ithaca new york 14853

(607)256 4431

OVERVIEW

to

STRATEGIES FOR COORDINATING EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES:

A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF FOUR IN-SCHOOL ALTERNATIVES

This is the first of a series of Occasional Papers to be prepared by the Youthwork National Policy Study on a variety of issues related to the Exemplary In-School Demonstration Project. This project has been funded by the U. S. Department of Labor through an intermediary non-profit corporation, Youthwork, Inc.

The Occasional Paper pays particular attention to an explication of four in-school strategies being sponsored by Youthwork, Inc. Each of these strategies seeks to explore a means by which to link education and employment services for in-school youth. Of concern is the specification of within-strategy variations. It is not enough to simply state that a general strategy is applicable to the needs of youth as they seek assistance in their transition from school to work. What is needed is a more precise delineation of what variations within the strategy appear most successful for which target groups of youth. A first effort at such specification is made in the present paper. A more extensive and detailed analysis of this same area of investigation will be forthcoming in the third Interim Report of the Youthwork National Policy Study, due for publication in March 1980.

Additional copies of this report may be obtained by writing in care of the above address.

November 1979

a collaborative project of Youthwork, Inc. and New York State College of Human Ecology, a statutory college of the state university

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION..... 1

CHAPTER ONE: EXPANDED PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT..... 7

CHAPTER TWO: CAREER AWARENESS.....19

CHAPTER THREE: JOB CREATION THROUGH YOUTH OPERATED PROJECTS.....33

CHAPTER FOUR: ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR WORK EXPERIENCE.....45

INTRODUCTION

The Exemplary In-School Demonstration Projects

The Exemplary In-School Demonstration Projects are being conducted under Title IV, Part A of the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (YEDPA) of 1977. The projects are a set of local programs which represent an effort by the U.S. Department of Labor to explore improved means of providing employment and training opportunities for young people, particularly those from low-income, minority families. Each local program has come into being as a result of an agreement between local educational agencies and CETA prime sponsors to coordinate efforts so as to better prepare youth for the world of work.

To assist the Department of Labor and its regional offices in initiating these projects, Youthwork, Inc. was established in January 1978. It is one of four private, non-profit, "intermediary" corporations

supported by the Department of Labor from discretionary funds made available through the YEDPA legislation. Youthwork's special mandate from the Department of Labor has been to focus on the employment problems of in-school youth, on the capacities of educational and CETA systems to address these problems, and on the critical issues emerging from the evolving relationship between CETA and the schools.

The means by which Youthwork has sought to respond to this mandate has been through its involvement with the 48 Exemplary In-School Demonstration Projects. Each project, competitively selected, was to be an exemplary effort in one of four areas: (1) expanded private sector involvement, (2) job creation through youth operated projects. (3) academic credit for work experience, or (4) career awareness, guidance, and job seeking skills. The special focus of these projects has been on the relation between in-school (or those who can be persuaded to return to school) youth and employment/training opportunities. The underlying rationale is one of bridging the traditional schism in American society between school and work by developing a number of mechanisms which allow these two experiences to overlap. Rather than youth experiencing their education and work as dichotomous and unrelated, the aim is to explore innovative means by which to make them coterminous and interrelated.

The individual local programs selected for this demonstration project were slated to operate from between nine to eighteen months, i.e., between September 1978 and March 1980. Programs could include summer activities in 1979 if those activities were shown to be a logical extension of the school year program. They were funded from

$15 million set aside by the Department of Labor for discretionary projects under the authority of the YETP legislation. The projected size of the youth populations to be served in the programs varied from a low of 35 to a high of 10,000. Sites were located across the nation in 31 states and in locations that ranged from the most rural to the largest cities. Individual grants ranged from approximately $175,000 to $400,000 with the average being near $300,000.

Youthwork, Inc. and Knowledge Development

While the direct support for youth employment programs commands the bulk of YEDPA appropriations, improved knowledge is of high priority. Indeed, the Congress authorized in the legislation that up to a full 20 percent of the YEDPA funding could be used for demonstration projects seeking innovative means by which to address the problem of youth employment. The first general principle of the YEDPA Planning Charter of August 1977 stated:

> Knowledge development is a primary aim of the new youth programs. At every decision-making level, an effort must be made to try out promising ideas, to support on-going innovation and to assess performance as rigorously as possible. Resources should be concentrated and structured so that the underlying ideas can be given a reasonable test. Hypotheses and questions should be determined at the outset, with an evaluation methodology built in.

The programmatic activities of Youthwork, Inc. are a direct response by the Department of Labor to this mandate. With Youthwork focusing on in-school youth and the manner in which the educational and CETA systems are able to contribute to the resolution of the youth unemployment problem, there has been achieved that necessary concentration of resources

"so that the underlying ideas can be given a reasonable test". The Youthwork knowledge development effort has predicated its endeavor upon the following assumptions:

--More is known about the intentions of innovative youth programs than about program operations.

--More is known about program outcomes than the processes that generated such outcomes.

--More is known of the reasons for program failure than for program success.

With these assumptions explicated, Youthwork formulated four knowledge development goals, each of which sought to address the imbalance described in one or more of the assumptions listed above.

1) To identify barriers to program implementation and how to overcome them.
2) To identify unique features within programs that most help youth to achieve program objectives.
3) To examine both the degree and direction in which participating institutions have changed, and how these changes took place.
4) To assess basic assumptions underlying both the policy and practice of in-school programs in helping youth make the transition from school to work.

To achieve these goals, Youthwork structured its knowledge development activities towards data collection and analysis in three areas: the central policy question of the respective roles and responsibilities of the educational and CETA systems vis-a-vis youth employment and training; programmatic issues relating to the implementation

and collaboration of approaches undertaken by projects in the four focal areas; and the local knowledge development issues unique to each program operator and community.

It is to aspects of both the second and fourth of these data collection and analysis areas that this present Occasional Paper is addressed. This report seeks to provide an initial discussion of some of the basic aspects of the various strategies. It also assesses some of the fundamental assumptions about the transition from school to work and the manner in which different strategies are thought to assist in that transition.

Occasional Paper #1

The period to be covered by this Occasional Paper--September 1978 through August 1979--provides a one year time frame within which to examine the evolution of the strategies being employed by the Exemplary In-School Projects. As noted above, four broad strategies have been operationalized in this effort. The task of this present Occasional Paper is to offer a preliminary analysis of the parameters of each of these four approaches. Furthermore, the aim is not only to establish boundaries around each of the four, but to begin an analysis of the within-strategy variations. If we might extrapolate from much of the educational research of the late 1960's and through to the mid-1970's, one key finding was that within-school variations tended to encompass nearly all the variations one might also find in studies of between-school variations. Consequently, to focus on the nuances and alternative approaches available within any one of the four broad strategies allows for greater specificity as well as a finer-grained analysis

of what programs appear most advantageous for which groups of target youth.

It should be stressed that this Occasional Paper is a tentative outlining of the strategies and their variations. No new data are reported here. It is presented essentially as a "think piece". A more in-depth analysis will be forthcoming in March of 1980 when the Youthwork National Policy Study publishes its third Interim Report. This present effort comes at the request of Youthwork, Inc. to offer an informed yet brief assessment of the four strategies, paying particular attention to the distinguishing characteristics and the alternatives available within each.

CHAPTER ONE

EXPANDED PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT

INTRODUCTION

In 1978 Youthwork, Inc., funded eleven programs within the focus area of Expanded Private Sector Involvement. The dual goals of these programs were to assist youth in their transition from school to work and to encourage the involvement of private sector employers in in-school youth programs. Strategies relevant to the attainment of this latter goal are the focus of the analysis in this paper. First, however, it is necessary to provide a framework within which these strategies may be discussed.

The concept of "program model" connotates a philosophic and methodological approach to an activity. "Traditional" education and "alternative" education represent two models of education. They differ both in their philosophical approach of why one educates as well as in their methodological approach to how one educates. At a less generic level, one can distinguish among "program strategies". Here one has the possibility of more precisely delineating within model variations, e.g., the varieties of alternative education approaches to the matter of classroom discipline or to individualized instruction.

It is at this latter level of program strategies that the current private sector programs can be most usefully analyzed. There do exist differences in strategies. However, they are not distinctive enough to generate different models. For example, all eleven programs have a classroom phase and all eleven have a work experience phase. Within the classrooms all programs use essentially the same activities: career awareness/exploration, values clarification, basic skills, survival skills, employment skills (e.g. interviewing, application completion), discussions of employee responsibilities. The distinguishing aspect is that there do exist differences in the mix of activities. Within the work experience, all programs use "vocational exploration". The distinction here is solely in the length of these experiences.

The success of various strategies may vary with different populations. Division of programs by the context in which they operate--traditional schools, alternative schools and training centers--may provide a key analytic framework from within which to examine more closely the experiences encountered by similar youth in similar/dissimilar settings or different youth across similar settings. In this manner it is thought possible to distinguish variables impacting upon the success/failure of various program components, e.g., "Why did intervention work in this program but not in another?" Additionally, the similarity of program components may help us understand why certain strategies or approaches work with, for example, the youth identified for traditional school programs but not for training center or alternative school students.

The use of settings as a means of distinguishing among how the private sector is involved is, perhaps, of limited value. Private sector

involvement is not dependent upon the setting of the program but rather on the effort of those individuals operating the program to recruit private sector employers. However, where appropriate as a means of differentiation, the settings will be identified.

It is appropriate before going further to interject a brief description of the three educational settings. The traditional schools (five programs) are that large majority of schools in this country which have a highly structured educational format. Alternative schools (four programs) tend to be flexible in their procedures and in some instances are designed to attract and educationally stimulate those students who have rejected and subsequently dropped out of traditional schools. Alternative schools also respond to the need of traditional schools to find a place for youth who disturb the traditional schooling process. Training centers (two programs) are specifically designed to provide a technical skill which can be used in a specific field of employment. Education leading to a high school degree (or a GED) may be, but is not necessarily, a part of the training center approach to education.

PROGRAM STRATEGIES

Program strategies represent methods used to accomplish a program objective. Involvement of the private sector through the provision of work experiences for program youth suggests clearly distinguishable strategies. Five such strategies are examined in this section. The strategies reviewed include: community partners, vocational exploration, identification/acquisition of work sites, private sector advisory councils, and work subsidization approaches.

Community Partners: One means of linking the private sector and youth programs is through the use of community partners. These individuals are community businessmen, active or retired, who function in the program on a one-to-one basis with youth. The mentor relationship is intended to provide the youth someone with whom they can call upon for advise, counsel, and assistance as they prepare for entry into the business world. Three programs (Table I) have opted to employ this strategy.

TABLE I

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY PARTNER PROGRAMS

Setting	Community Partner	Total Number of Programs
Traditional School	1	5
Alternative School	2	4
Training Center	0	2
Totals	3	11

One program, located in five traditional schools, identified approximately 50 community businessmen per school who agreed to act as resource persons for the youth participants. A youth interested in a particular field of employment would arrange an appointment with one of the appropriate community businessmen. During the meeting, the youth and businessman discuss the business, perhaps take a tour, and then jointly plan an education program which would prepare the youth for employment in that particular field. The level of successful

involvement and use of private sector businessmen is best portrayed in a Monthly Report which notes that 212 of 284 of these "employer-based counselors" have been used at some time during the program's operation. Protocol data further note that many employers had had contact with more than one student.

The role of community partners at two additional programs, both in alternative schools, goes beyond their use as simply resource persons. Beyond the resource relationship, these individuals act as counselors and friends. Neither program to date has had success with this strategy. The primary difficulty lies in the fact that the use of this strategy was not of primary importance to program operators. As such little emphasis has been placed on the identification of individuals who will serve as "mentors". A more concerted effort to utilize this strategy has been noted in recent protocols from one of these programs. Failure of this program strategy during the first year was attributed to the fact that no one had been assigned to oversee its operation. Currently, two individuals are working to get this strategy underway.

The clear differences in the success rates with this strategy appear to be more a function of program implementation than one of setting or youth served. As alternative school programs upgrade their efforts in this area these latter two factors may be of interest for analysis. To date, what is clearly shown is that this strategy, as used by the traditional school, has actively involved private sector employers in a youth program.

Vocational Exploration: All eleven programs have a component termed "vocational exploration". This work experience component varies

between programs in both duration (weeks to months) and hours per week (up to 20 hours/week). For youth, vocational exploration represents direct contact with anywhere from one to many private sector employers. In general, their response to this experience has been positive. As Interim Report #2 (Rist, et al., 1979b: 70 draft) notes, 14 of 23 interviewed youth, who discussed both their career interests and their work placements, were placed in work experiences which matched their career interests. Furthermore, a survey at one program found that 72 percent (42 of 55) of the youth were satisfied with their placements.

Specific complaints about their work experiences came from only eight of 37 interviewed youth, while nine youth (16 percent) responding to the survey noted that they were dissatisfied with their work placements. The dissatisfaction with work experiences centered around the fact that the jobs were boring or that the youth received the "dirty" jobs (e.g. garbage detail, clean up). Additionally youth were less receptive of short term vocational explorations which were not in their career interest area.

The less receptive response to short-term vocational exploration may in part be due to the rational for its use. They represent a brief encounter with the world of work but not necessarily an experience in a youth's particular area of interest. A youth's receptivity to vocational exploration may be lowered when (s)he is placed in a work experience not in line with his/her career interests.

The question which needs to be resolved is whether vocational exploration should focus on variety or specificity of work experiences. That is, should youth be exposed briefly to many different work settings

or placed for a longer time in a work setting which specifically reflects their career interest?

Identification/Acquisition of Work Sites: The ability of private sector programs to identify sufficient work placements for their youth participants has been a difficult task (see Rist, et al., 1979a, p. 31). The majority of programs placed this responsibility (some might prefer to call it a burden) with program personnel. Either the program teachers themselves or a special work coordinator had to do this job.

At only one site located in a traditional school, was there a different approach to work site acquisition. In this situation the youth (N of about 130), in small groups, canvassed the surrounding neighborhood for potential work sites. At the end of this effort, lasting about three months, over seven hundred businesses had expressed an interest in the program. The level of interest ranged from wanting to know more about the program to giving presentations to giving tours of their business to accepting a vocational exploration student. The success of this strategy for work site identification/acquisition yielded far more potential work experiences than could be used.

Experiences during the first year (1978-1979) suggest that strategies used to identify/acquire private sector participation need to be reviewed. Replication of the process by which youth themselves systematically canvassed potential work sites needs to be seriously considered as an alternative approach to that which most programs heretofore employed.

Private Sector Advisory Councils: A direct link between youth programs and private sector employers can be achieved by the creation of advisory councils. These councils should bring together:

> ...representatives of the important institutions and sectors of the community that have the responsibility, resources, and influence to deal with the whole of the transition to regular adult employment. It means an attempt to accomplish jointly what could not be achieved singly, and a whole that is larger than the sum of its parts (Barton, 1979: 11).

Attempts to do this have been inconsistant at best. The following descriptions suggest the experiences to date.

Information from ten programs suggest that the most prevalent condition is one in which a private sector advisory council has not been established. Of the six programs in this category only one appears to have attempted to initiate this form of advisory council. One meeting was held this past summer (over six months into the program) which was attended by only five employers. No further effort in establishing the council has been made. At a second program the advisory council may be meeting for the first time in the near future (over eleven months from program startup). There is no indication from the other four programs that any effort exists to establish private sector involvement through advisory councils.

Successful incorporation of private sector employers in program operation has occurred at four sites. Three programs utilized private sector input when developing the program. Of the three, one stands out as what might be considered the ideal advisory council. The activities of this council include: guiding the activities of the organization operating the program; identifying areas for and the content of training programs of the parent organization; helping design the current program; providing resources for the program (e.g. business tours, guest speakers); identifying work placements for program participants; identifying permanent jobs for the trainees of both the parent organization and this program.

The fourth program represents a successful transition from the first category of programs (no advisory council) to this latter category. Initiated several months after the program began, this council was at first brought together to be informed of the program. Businessmen left this initial meeting impressed but unsure of their role. Eventually, however, this council has taken on two primary roles: dissemination of information about the program to other businessmen and identification of work placement sites.

The use of this strategy, as with the use of community partners appears to reflect a lack of initiative on the part of those operating the programs at six sites. As the last case cited demonstrates, active private sector advisory councils can be achieved even if begun well into the program.

Work Subsidization: The approaches to work placement subsidization represent a fifth strategy. Investigation in this area is important as little is currently known about what will and will not foster private sector participation in youth programs (Elsman, 1979:20). Three basic approaches to this strategy can be identified within the current programs: full subsidy, sliding or partial subsidy, and no subsidy. Vocational exploration for youth at seven programs has been paid for in full by the program. This includes all five programs operating within traditional schools and two alternative school programs. The sliding scale subsidy approach occurs at two alternative schools and one training center, while no subsidy is used at one training center. Table 2 privides the distribution of subsidy approaches across the eleven programs.

TABLE 2

PROGRAM SETTING AND WORK SUBSIDIZATION APPROACH

Setting	Subsidy Approach			Total Number of Sites
	Full	Sliding	None	
Traditional School	5	0	0	5
Alternative School	2	2	0	4
Training Center	0	1	1	2
Totals	7	3	1	11

The goal of two of the three programs using the sliding scale subsidy approach (one alternative school, one training center) is for a proportion of the youth to end up in full-time unsubsidized jobs. It should prove interesting to observe over time how successful this process will be in creating jobs for youth.

One training center has used no subsidy when placing youth in work experiences. An active advisory council has helped locate placements within its member businesses. One could speculate that this training center, which provided trainees with specific marketable skills, may have been more confident than other programs, in the ability of its graduates and therefore felt that subsidization was unnecessary.

Programs using both full and partial work subsidies have experienced the reluctance of some businessmen to accept reimbursement from the in-school programs for pay given to students. Early in one program using the full subsidy approach, eleven of twelve employers refused to accept reimbursement for what they would pay the youth. It is not that these employers were uninterested in the subsidy, but rather they were willing to forego it rather than open their business to potential government inspection.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The focus this paper has been on five strategies which can be used to foster private sector participation in youth programs. At a conceptual level each of these strategies appears to have high potential for fostering youth program/private sector cooperation. At an operational level the efforts to date have not achieved this potential.

The community partners and private sector advisory councils strategies both appear to be in need of greater effort on the part of program operators. The success of both of these strategies is clearly linked to programs which have focussed upon these program aspects, rather than seeing them as something that might be done if there is time.

The successful use of students as locators of potential work placements suggests that other programs, which had difficulty identifying placements, consider this approach. Also, an active advisory council can be seen to have facilitated identification of work placements.

Vocational exploration has been well received by program youth. The aspect of this strategy which needs further investigation is whether vocational exploration should focus on providing youth with a wide variety of work experiences or on only a specific few. While a variety approach allows youth to consider multiple career directions, a specificity approach may better prepared youth for a job.

Approaches to subsidization of the work experience phase have perhaps the greatest potential for involvement of employers. To date, no one approach can be seen to have been more effective in acquiring work placements. It is interesting to note that many employers have refused reimbursement for the salaries paid to students, regardless of subsidy approach. These employers have expressed a high interest in the program but at the same time they are reluctant to become involved to such an extent that it allows the federal government involvement in the operation of their businesses. Finally, the gradual reduction of support via the sliding scale subsidy approach needs to be monitored to determine if this approach is effective in creating permanent jobs for program youth.

REFERENCES

Barton, Paul E., "Community Councils and the Transitions Between Education and Work", Industry/Education Community Councils. NIE Papers in Education and Work: No. 9, Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education, 1977.

Elsman, Max, Involving the Private Sector in Youth Transition to Work Programs: A Literature Review and the State of the Art. (draft) Washington, D.C.: Youthwork, Inc., August 1979.

Rist, Ray C., et al., Forging New Relationships: The CETA/School Nexus. (Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.: Youthwork National Policy Study). 1979a

Rist, Ray C., et al., Education and Employment Training: The Views of Youth. (Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.: Youthwork National Policy Study) 1979b

CHAPTER TWO

CAREER AWARENESS

The National Commission for Manpower Policy recommends that research on government CETA programs focus on the analysis of the strengths of different strategies (1978). Their report entitled CETA: An analysis of the issues states:

> In view of the rapid and continuing growth of federal manpower programs, together with the deliberate shifts in programmatic emphasis, it would seem reasonable to assume that the efficacy of manpower programs, in their various forms, was well established. This is not the case, however. Not only is the efficacy of any single program more an article of faith than documented evidence, but also there are very few clues regarding the relative efficacy of alternative programmatic approaches (pp. 107-108).

The report continues:

> Our concern is not simply to determine which program type is "best" for all target populations and in all economic situations--a Don Quixote quest--but rather to determine which program types are most effective for specific target groups in given economic situations (p. 124).

This present paper analyzes the four key strategies employed by the twelve career awareness projects. Each of the twelve projects, has emphasized one or a combination of learning situations for the participating youth. The wide range of opportunities have included job-seeking skill training, personal awareness counseling sessions, information about different careers, training in group dynamics, on-the-job work experience, and counseling about personal directions for the future.

In sorting how the youth received services at the various sites, four programmatic alternatives have emerged. The four include 1) alternative school, 2) employment training, 3) in-school career awareness, and 4) work experience. The distinguishing feature for each of the four program strategies has been the context within which the learning experience took place, be it at the alternative school, at the employment training program, within the curriculum of a traditional school, or at a job site (see Table 1). The context has influenced 1) the target group availability and selection, 2) the ways for collaborating with the primary educational organization, 3) the staff roles vis-a-vis the youth, 4) the activity structures, and 5) the opportunities for decision-making by the youth.

Table 1 indicates that five program operators sponsor programs with two or more strategies. For example, non-profit organization 12 operates three district models through the exemplary project: an alternative school, an in-school career awareness, and a work experience. Each model functions independently with a separate identity, even though the three strategies are financed and managed by the same non-profit corporation. Note also that not all programs within each model are included in the report, most often because the observer focused in

TABLE 1

PROGRAM STRATEGIES AT CAREER AWARENESS SITES

Creator[a]		Alternative School	Employment Training	In-School Career Awareness	Work Experience
LEA	1				x
	2	x			
Consortium	3	x		(x)	
	4			(x)	x
	5			(x)	(x)
Prime Sponsor	6		x		
Community College	7			x	
	8		x		
	9		x		
Non-Profit	10			(x)	x
Organization	11				(x)
	12	x		x	x
Total Reporting		3	3	2	4

[a]Programs 5 and 11 did not provide data for this report.

[b]Parentheses indicate sites where information was not available for this report.

depth on one model, not having time to focus on all. The purpose of this report is to explain what we do know and understand to be unique strengths and weaknesses of each strategy.

PROGRAM STRATEGIES

Alternative School. Three projects have operated career information programs through alternative schools affiliated with the regional public school systems. The project operators (a consortium, an LEA, and a non-profit organization) respectively sponsor an alternative junior high, one staff member in an alternative high school, and two staff members and a day care program in a school for teenage mothers and mothers-to-be. Students have categorized their alternative school as the final option within the educational system by which they might achieve a high school diploma.

Target group availability and selection: The alternative school model attracted dropouts and youth who had experienced or feared social and/or academic failure at their traditional high school. The model schools provided an opportunity to succeed in school and to work toward a diploma. The staff at the traditional schools within the same school system as the alternative schools apparently understood the purpose of the project, for they served as a primary referral source for the school.

Collaboration with the primary educational organization: The alternative school model makes it financially possible for the affiliated school system to address the special needs of the target youth through a "separate" program outside the mainstream. Because the referral system for gaining access to the students has worked primarily through the

teachers and counselors of traditional high schools, one can safely say a link exists. One program is currently trying to enter into a closer affiliation with the traditional public school by having that school assume some of the services for one age group previously performed by the exemplary program school.

Staff roles vis-a-vis the youth: The alternative school programs promoted a context for developing teacher/counselor roles that has fostered close student-teacher interaction. The role description of the teacher/counselor was dependent upon the working philosophy of the school rather than upon the narrow constructs of a particular career information packet or method. Staff members worked with the emotional, behavioral, and personal problems of the youth. Staff had both the luxury of taking the time to care, and the freedom to construct a curriculum responsive to the special needs of the students.

Activity structures. Career information activitities for the alternative schools have weighted less important for the youth than has the role of their teacher/counselor. The needs of youth at these schools revolved around emotional and behavioral counseling as well as moving them toward a diploma. The job counseling, when it did occur, assumed an individual approach according to youth needs and interests as well as staff talents. No pre-packaged curricula were employed, though one school attempted to design its own. Observations of that process indicate this was an unsuccessful use of staff time. Field trips (1 site), arrangement of job interviews (1 site), and formal and informal counseling (3 sites) were major activities.

Decision-making opportunities. Youth chose to enter the alternative school programs because these programs offer re-entry into

schooling or easier access to a diploma. This element of choice may well have influenced their strong sense of belonging to the schools, and their new outlook on their life chances.

EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

One prime sponsor and two community colleges have operated the employment training strategy. This approach has featured planned sessions on job-seeking skills, employment opportunities, and personal awareness. Clients have actively sought the program because of these attractive features, hoping that it would help them make the transition from school to work. Two programs have extensively trained peers preparing them for the role of future trainers. The sessions have been indpendent of the school curriculum, meaning that the students have come after school. In the third instance, the students participated in an all-day, two month long program.

Target group availability and selection: The employment training strategy for older youth offered an intensive four week program that gave them assistance in planning their next steps for work or schooling. The in-school group was primarily seeking advancement towards a GED while the out of school youth sought work and/or training direction. The program for in-school high school youth had difficulty recruiting youth to participate after-school hours and on Saturdays.

Collaboration with the primary educational organization: The program for high school youth ran indpendent of the schools, and experienced frustrations when trying to link their program to school teachers and counselors. They succeeded in training only two teachers during their sessions. Both college programs experienced difficulties

navigating their program through channels within their educational systems. One director at a college program resigned partly because of these difficulties. The second program experienced a delayed start-up partly because of difficulties in coordinating the program and college staff over program staffing and purposes.

Staff roles vis-a-vis the youth: When teacher/trainers gave older youth job-seeking skill training, they designed tasks and exercises to bring about learning in that area. Teachers were perceived as lively, flexible, and caring, as well as competent trainers. The program for high school youth had teacher/counselors, who facilitated a group process and sharing of feelings.

Activity structures: Sessions at four sites focused on career information, job-seeking skills, and counseling. Interviews conducted at one college program indicate the older adolescents spoke positively about the intensive four week self-awareness and job-seeking skill development as helping them direct themselves toward further training or a job. No information indicates how the high school group perceived their experiences within the employment training approach.

Decision-making opportunities for the youth: The group of older adolescents at one college program indicated that the program encouraged responsibility, be it training in getting to work on time and staying all day, or earning a salary. They felt that the activity structures mentioned earlier helped them determine next steps for their education and work goals. Youth mentioned that they had learned better how to set goals for themselves and then follow through in carrying out a job search.

IN-SCHOOL CAREER AWARENESS

The in-school career awareness strategy introduces career information into the existing services already present at traditional high schools. Six operators sponsor such projects. The efforts consisted of either setting up career information centers in district high schools (two projects) or conducting workshops for high school teachers, hoping that these teachers will incorporate this information into their curriculum (four projects). In contrast to the alternative school and employment training approaches, the nature of the service is non-intensive, of short duration, and targeted toward large numbers of youth. Students participated in projects by entering an information center or unknowingly by attending regular class periods taught by their teacher who attended a project training workshop.

Target group availability and selection: The in-school career awareness approach appears to do little to reach the hard-to-reach or dropout prone, as this model is non staff/student intensive and has not given evidence of holding youth in school. The effort essentially seeks to reach the high school population, and assumes that a certain percentage will be CETA eligible.

Collaboration with the primary educational organization: Collaboration occurs in two ways: the sharing of space and staff. All six programs employing this strategy are physically located within the public schools, in either career centers or classrooms. Three programs attempt to reach large numbers of high school teachers through training workshops centered on career awareness techniques and information that these teachers may incorporate into their classes. Teachers are paid for participation in the workshops.

Staff roles vis-a-vis the youth: Staff involved in two programs see structural barriers preventing them from entering into the close student-teacher relationships that they foresee as necessary to accomplish the program goals. The target teachers in one program do not see themselves as the primary deliverers of career awareness to their students; the paraprofessionals in a second program see many organizational norms in the school preventing access to students in their centers and thereby not attracting students easily. At both sites, staff indicate that they are uncertain about project goals.

Activity structures: Center projects and target teacher projects have been providing career information to multiple high schools in a single large district and to single sites across multiple districts. Methods of incorporating the strategy into the educational program were so diffuse and goals so vague that it is impossible to deduce project impact on teachers, paraprofessionals, or students.

Decision-making opportunities: Students in target teacher programs entered involuntarily. Thus, no deductions can be made about decision-making opportunities in the projects. Competing organizational structures of the career information projects and the schools prevented students from being able to engage in activities. These impediments included student schedules full of traditional high school activities, which allowed little or no time to enter the center.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Five projects have operated on the basis of a work experience strategy where youth performed apprenticeships at worksites. A sixth

project never placed youth in jobs. The extent and form of counseling and job-seeking skill training that accompanied the actual work experience varied among projects. Placements included both private sector and the public sector, large bureaucratic organizations, and small owner operated businesses.

Target group availability and selection: The work experience model attracted in-school youth who wanted work. Four schools located placements for the students through administrators, teachers, or counselors. A fifth program placed youth who had had applications on file at a youth employment office. For youth placed through the schools, informal connections to the people running the programs influenced their chances of being selected. The entry processes varied considerably: at one program candidates were sifted out where supervisors thought them unlikely to succeed in the placements; at another, elaborate procedures helped insure an appropriate fit between the students' interests and job apprenticeship.

Collaboration with the primary educational organization: This strategy represents a potentially fruitful form of collaboration, particularly the potential for absorption of this approach into the mainstream of the general high school curriculum. Teachers at one program have elaborated on how that might be done and how the program might be expanded to include more students. Another program experienced no need for collaboration with the school in the work experience component, as it was managed independently of the school.

Staff roles vis-a-vis the youth: An important component of these programs was the perception by the youth of the on-site supervisors

and placement counselors as being helpful, available, and supportive. These attributes help make the experience a learning experience for the student apprentice. However, the quality of the work experience at two sites suffered when such a teacher/counselor role was not adequately developed.

Activity structures: Data are sketchy regarding activities engaged in at the sites. Three programs combined work experience with job readiness or job-seeking skills. One program placed students in ready-made slots, and provided no supervision. Students have voiced their concern about those instances where there has been inadequate supervision or where the job-skill sessions were inappropriate and not integrated into their work experience. One program, however, excelled in combining counseling, supervision, job-seeking skills and an actual apprenticeship.

Decision-making opportunities for youth: Youth voluntarily opted to enter the programs. In the larger apprentice program placing its full quota of 100 students, staff expressed much frustration at having to turn away many willing and eager applicants.

Responsibility assumed by youth at various stages of the work experience varied according to projects and deserves further investigation. Additional study might include: 1) Placement: To what degree did the students indicate their choice of apprenticeship and actually get their choice. One program experienced a high level of choice, and students interviewed underlined the importance of being able to do what they wanted to do. All students in another program entered the same insurance corporation and did not complain about the placement probably because they had been seeking a job through their counselors for some time. 2) Entry: Some students had to initiate the process of getting a job by taking the initiative to

seek out the placement person. Others were helped along the way, particularly when difficulties or inappropriate placements arose. 3) Apprenticeship: Students experienced varying degrees or opportunities for taking responsible work roles. One student assumed the position of photographer for the newspaper after the regular staff person resigned, although this was unplanned. It was more luck, he was there, he was competent, and he assumed the workload. It would be useful to more systematically review the degree of responsibility planned for and assumed in the jobs.

CONCLUSIONS

This review of the four strategies in operation under the career awareness focus area indicates that variations exist between and within the models along the dimensions of target group included, the nature and extent of collaboration with the primary educational organization, staff roles vis-a-vis the youth, activity structures, and decision-making opportunities for the youth. The review suggests that particular strategies are well suited for certain purposes.

The intensive services of the alternative school, employment training, and work experience strategies meet the special needs of three separate groups of youth in three very different ways. While the activity structures, decision-making opportunities and target group vary for each of the three models, the successful programs each have staff who provide direction and feedback throughout the student's affiliation with the program. When this direction is not provided, youth and adults have noted negative consequences (e.g., youth begin to get bored with the job, youth do not experience satisfaction in training, job-site supervisors express a desire for more direction).

Further research by the YNPS will examine progress toward collaboration with the primary educational organization. Of particular concern will be those instances where the traditional school staff are incorporating parts of the exemplary project into the school curriculum. Further identification of decision-making opportunities for youth in the projects, and implications of these instances for youth and staff will also be explored.

REFERENCES

National Commission for Manpower Policy, CETA: An analysis of the Issues. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., May, 1978.

Youthwork National Policy Study, Forging new relationships: the CETA/ School Nexus. Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., June, 1979.

Youthwork National Policy Study, Education and Employment Training: The views of Youth. Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., October, 1979.

CHAPTER THREE

JOB CREATION THROUGH YOUTH OPERATED PROJECTS

INTRODUCTION

The Youthwork grant process selected twelve sites for funding under the heading of youth-initiated projects. The sites are both rural and urban and proposed to serve anywhere from a low of 35 to a high of 300 disadvantaged youth. The total number expected to be involved in the projects was approximately 1,750 youth. Three of the projects were located in major cities with populations exceeding one million people. Six were located in cities with populations between one hundred thousand and five hundred thousand people. Three were in cities not quite large enough to qualify as prime sponsors but with populations over fifty thousand. Two projects were in very remote rural areas.

Several approaches have been used in establishing the youth-initiated projects. Graham (1978) describes them as follows:

School Sheltered Projects:

> These include personal service and business projects inside the school such as tutoring or peer counseling (as in National Commission on Resources for Youth Projects): running a fast food school cafeteria on a concession basis; running a school based job printing shop for materials used in school and for outside jobs as well; running a school based student store or bank and loan agency; and providing school bookkeeping services on a contract basis (as at Mesa Verde High School). The projects may also be of a more familiar kind, such as Junior Achievement enterprises; publishing the school newspaper; and putting on a dance, play, or concert, or fund raiser for which work must be divided, with money collected and accounted for.

Projects of Personal or Community Service Outside of School:

> These include youth employment services (such as Rent-a-Kid of Boston); organizing a teen center or a hot line; operating a transportation pool; carrying out a community clean-up project; creating a mini-park; conducting a community survey; managing a recycling center, or providing services for the aged or retarded (many of these are reported in National Student Volunteer Program publications, ACTION, Washington, D.C.).

Income Producing Outside of School:

> These include franchised businesses for youth; community based organizations and youth-operated service or contracting businesses such as building maintenance or restoration.

This paper is an effort to delineate alternative formulations so as to analyze the internal differences within the youth-initiated projects. The focus is on the issues as developed by Youthwork, Department of Labor staff, and the staff of the Youthwork National Policy Study. For the youth-initiated projects, these issues are clustered in the areas

organizational effectiveness, level of youth involvement, and program strategies.

Each issue involves a different perspective from which to examine the youth-initiated projects. For example, organizational effectiveness has frequently been examined from the point of view of the sponsoring agency. Youth-initiated projects were sponsored by CETA prime sponsors, Local Education Authorities, and by Non-Profit Organizations (Community Based Organizations and Tribal Organizations). Using MIS data provided by the Blackstone Institue, each of these sponsoring organizations was evaluated as to their ability to meet projected enrollment goals during the first six months of the Youthwork grant period. This analysis of youth-initiated projects stimulated a discussion of the sponsoring organization most likely to be effective in a short-run demonstration effort such as that staged by Youthwork, Inc. in the fall of 1978. Organizational sponsor will be the key variable for sorting youth-initiated projects. Within sponsorship categories, we will examine two ways of understanding the internal differences among youth-initiated projects.

A way to sub-divide the youth-initiated projects is to view them as clusters of projects which emphasize either adult or youth control. The first class of projects are youth employment projects that are adult managed and the second class of projects are youth managed. These latter projects often do not involve the creation of paid jobs, are not targeted primarily towards low-income youth, and have a separate history of their own.

The other sub-division to be used to explicate the internal differences among youth-initiated projects involves the dominant strategy

implemented by each project. These strategies have been grouped into three categories: peer counseling, work experience, and brokerage. These categories represent the types of experiences offered participating youth at youth-initiated projects.

Two caveats are needed. The first is suggested by Graham (1978).

> ...There is not a clear distinction among the three approaches to youth-initiated projects, nor is there a neat division between projects almost entirely started and run by youth and those in which youth participate but which are set up and supervised by adults. The three kinds of projects have several purposes in common, although they differ in what they emphasize.

Given that the distinctions between types is blurred and the definition of categories is often arbitrary, it is difficult (if not impossible) to discern individual treatment effects. The design of youth-initiated projects precludes all but informed speculation when analyzing the issues.

The second caveat is posited by Pressman (1978) and is more explicit about the dangers of viewing the Youthwork, Inc. effort as an experiment.

> ...The distinction is important, because knowledge development, as defined in Youthwork's agreement with the Labor Department, emphasizes the development of information and ideas which are wanted and needed by the potential users of the knowledge, and recognizes the unlikelihood of developing truly experimental research designs in the time available and under the constraints and conditions which exist...

This paper should be viewed as an attempt to provide a conceptual framework for examining the youth-initiated projects.

ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSOR

In September 1978, Youthwork, Inc. funded twelve youth-initiated projects. These twelve were in Berkeley, California; Bronx, New York; Charleston, West Virginia; Chicago, Illinois; Elmira, New York; Hartford,

Connecticut; Orlando, Florida; Quitman, Georgia; and St. Paul, Minnesota. In the next few months, the sites began to hire staff and recruit enrollees. At the end of the March 1979 reporting period, Management Information System (MIS) data, prepared by the Blackstone Institute, was available for seven of the twelve funded projects. Using this information, projects were analyzed on the basis of organizational type as to the degree of effectiveness shown in reaching proposed enrollment objectives during the first six months of the Youthwork grant period.

A fundamental question guiding the work of the Youthwork National Policy Study is which type of organization (LEA, CETA, NPO, etc.) best serves disadvantaged youth along which dimensions. Programs administered by CETA prime sponsors, as a group, were more successful in reaching proposed enrollment figures in the first six months than were those youth-initiated projects administered by LEAs. Data for the non-profit organizations were not available. Using this criterion CETA sponsored projects became operational sooner, enrolled youth more rapidly, allocated monies more quickly, and followed their proposed plan more closely than did LEA sponsored projects. Table 1 gives the percent of proposed student target populations served by both LEA and CETA sponsored projects as of March 31, 1979.

TABLE 1

PERCENT OF PROPOSED PLAN BY TYPE OF OPERATOR*

Type		Percent	Operational Since
LEA:	1	19.3	December 1978
	2	137.7	November 1978
	3	8.3	December 1978
	4	33.5	September 1978
CETA:	1	94.7	January 1979
	2	62.5	October 1978
	3	86.9	October 1978

*Data not available for the two non-profit organization sponsors.
Source: Management Information System, Blackstone Institute, 1979.

The CETA sponsored programs were more successful for two tentative reasons. First, the level of familiarity with CETA regulations and procedures was higher thus reducing the time needed to implement program components. Second, CETA prime sponsors saw this effort (jobs program) as their primary function and could draw upon a history of having dealt with the problems inherent in implementing a program of this type. At best, school systems have seen this effort as being secondary to their primary goal of providing an education for young people. Efforts to implement these programs have been tangential to the main concerns of schools and therefore, the issues have not received high priority.

Of the four LEA sponsored programs, one began at the beginning of the proposed funding cycle (September 1978). The primary reason it was able to begin when it did was because the school system allocated its own funds to start the program and was reimbursed when Youthwork, Inc. funds became available. Another LEA had only seven students enrolled nine months into the project and was hoping to create a relationship with the summer SPEDY program to enlarge its' population. A third had to cancel one component of the planned project as the school system removed two staff who were intimately involved, and the project director fired a third staff member. Eventually, the project director resigned as well. As of March 1979, this project was also four to six months behind in reporting to Youthwork. The fourth project experienced difficulty acquiring space to run one of its' components. This component was slated to become operational during the summer of 1979.

In conclusion, using organizational sponsor as a variable upon which to analyze youth-initiated projects has provided useful information

for future efforts. When the key question was one of which organization best served disadvantaged youth along which dimensions and the specified dimension was "speed of reaching proposed plan", this analysis showed which group of projects seemed to be able to meet the criterion most readily. Protocol data were used to illustrate some of the problems LEA sponsored projects experienced which might have accounted for their failure to attain the same levels as CETA sponsored projects.

ADULT MANAGED VS. YOUTH MANAGED

The major focus of youth-initiated projects, as envisioned by Youthwork, Inc., was to increase youth participation in every aspect of project management, e.g. planning, administration, and evaluation. The application guidelines for the youth-initiated exemplary demonstration grant elaborated on this expected emphasis.

> ...Job creation through youth-operated projects has been selected as a primary area of focus because it raises crucial issues in national policy towards youth. Usually, young people are the "objects" of programs serving principally as spectators and consumers of goods and services. This passive role excludes young people from important experiences and skills. To be competent is to be the subject of an activity not the object. The measure of competence is what a person can do. Youth-operated projects are a way to experiment with approaches that develop competence by actively involving the enrollee in the task of creating socially meaningful and economically gainful employment. (DOL Application Guidelines--Exemplary Programs, 1978).

The youth-initiated projects can be divided into two groups according to whether they are youth managed or adult managed. Table 2 provides a summary of this division. The first class of projects

TABLE 2

ORGANIZATION SPONSOR AND ADULT/YOUTH MANAGEMENT AT YOUTH-INITIATED PROJECTS*

Organization Sponsor	Adult Managed	Youth Managed
CETA	1	2
LEA	4	1
NPO	2	0

*Data for two sites are not available. One project did not choose to cooperate with this research effort and the second has not yet begun operations.

includes those youth employment projects which are adult managed. Within this group, there is a continuum which runs from lesser to greater youth involvement. The majority (7) of the youth-initiated projects fit this description. They seek, essentially, to provide jobs for youth while attempting to increase youth involvement in certain aspects of project decision-making. The second class of projects emphasize youth management. At these sites, staff positions are filled by youth and the youth are responsible for the development of all aspects of the program. At least two of the three programs which make up this class of projects operate outside of the jurisdiction of school systems. Yet, they were developed or modeled after existing in-school programs.

PROGRAM STRATEGY

Program strategies consist of the services offered at each site. Table 3 presents relevant data for ten of the twelve youth-initiated projects.

TABLE 3

ORGANIZATION SPONSOR AND PROGRAM STRATEGIES FOR YOUTH-INITIATED PROJECTS*

Organization Sponsor	Peer Counseling	Work Experience	Brokerage
CETA	1	1	1
LEA	1	3	1
NPO	0	2	0

*Data for two sites are not available. One project did not choose to cooperate with this research effort and the second has not yet begun operations.

The rationale for using this as a key sorter is that there is considerable interest in knowing which strategies can effectively serve disadvantaged youth. Again, using the criteria of speed in achieving proposed plan, the different strategies have been analyzed on the basis of organizational sponsor.

The two projects offering peer counseling have been operated by an LEA and a CETA prime sponsor. The LEA sponsored project has operated at approximately 10 percent of projected student enrollment while the CETA sponsored project has operated at about 90 percent of projection (Blackstone Institute, March 1979). The LEA has been operational since December of 1978 and the CETA project since January 1979. A major difference between the two projects has been the attitude of the local prime sponsor and LEA towards the sponsoring agency of the project. The prime sponsor for the LEA sponsored project has resisted efforts to

implement the program and has often referred to the project as a waste of money. Another major problem for the LEA sponsored site has been the lack of a facility in which to run the project. This problem was solved late last spring. The LEA for the CETA sponsored site has been very supportive of the effort.

Among the work experience projects, three have been sponsored by LEAs and one was CETA sponsored. The CETA sponsored program has operated at 62.5 percent of projected student enrollment and the three LEA projects have functioned at 19.3, 33.5 and 137.7 percent of plan, respectively.

The two projects using a brokerage strategy have been sponsored by an LEA and a CETA prime sponsor. In the first six months, these projects have operated at 75.4 and 89 percent of plan, respectively. To illustrate the brokerage model, the following account from an on-site observer is provided.

> ...The youth are divided into twelve separate committee groups based on geographic area. Each group will perform a needs assessment of its area and then put together a proposal for funding based on the needs assessment. After the proposal is completed, it will be evaluated by a central committee composed equally of youth and adult staff. Once accepted, the youth on each of the committees will be responsible for implementing their proposal. It is expected that many of the proposals will turn out to be small profit-making businesses which will sustain themselves after the Youthwork project has officially ended. The decision as to what project will be carried out by the committees will be made by the youth themselves along with an adult advisor. Youth will be in charge and be held responsible every step of the way.

Program strategies appear to be a useful way to group projects so as to evaluate them along other dimensions (e.g.organization sponsor).

A direct comparison of peer counseling strategies with work experience strategies does not seem to be useful. Within strategies (e.g. peer counseling), projects can be evaluated as to the most effective organizational sponsors of such projects and other criteria which seem to be important for policy decisions.

REFERENCES

Graham, Richard A. "Youth Planned and Operated In-School and Community Based Projects". Youthwork, Inc., Washington, D.C. 1978.

Pressman, Harvey. "Job Creation Through Youth Operated Projects: What we need to learn and why we need to learn it." Youthwork, Inc., Washington, D.C. 1978.

U.S. Department of Labor. "Exemplary in-school youth programs demonstration project; application guidelines." Employment and Training Administration, Office of Youth Programs, April 6, 1978.

CHAPTER FOUR

ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR WORK EXPERIENCE

INTRODUCTION

The Academic Credit for Work Experience program focus area consists of twelve projects* funded by Youthwork, Inc. for their creative and unique strategies structured towards addressing the problems of youth unemployment. The common denominator of all the projects is the granting of academic credit to economically handicapped youths for work experience. To obtain this common end the twelve academic credit projects have designed a number of different experiences for youths to acquire competencies and skills.

The aim of the project strategies has been to help the economically handicapped youths matriculate towards graduation through earning

---

*Ten of these sites serve as the basis for the discussion in this report.

academic credits and to prepare them for the work world. Credit has been awarded to youths for attending career development, basic subject matter and employment skills classes; participating in career exploration, and for job placement work experiences. Participants have received minimum wage payment for their work placements in the public or private sector, and in some cases for time spent in class. Youth participants have ranged in their school achievement from high school dropouts to young adults with some post-secondary schooling.

To explore and analyze the different strategies implemented by the academic credit projects the projects have been categorized by means of their physical location. This categorization is thought to be a useful means by which to understand the basic similarities and differences between projects as well as to discern the impact and utility of strategies aimed towards helping youth participants. Four program settings will be the foundation for the analysis: 1) the target/recipient population, 2) program activities and 3) social organization of the academic credit for work experience programs.

PROGRAM POPULATION

The program strategies have attracted and served different youth population groups. The mandated CETA target population economic eligibility criterium with a few exceptions has assured that across all projects the economic profile of participants is the same, i.e. economically handicapped. Within this category of youth, there have been differences across programs in age (from 14 to 21 years old) and educational status (high school dropout, high school completed/some post-high school, and in-school). These differences have impacted on the utility of programs

to participants as youths from different educational backgrounds and different ages have demonstrated dissimilar needs. The characteristics of participants in each of the program settings has been determined, in part, by how the participants learned of the program. Table 1 below summarizes participant characteristics and provides a reference for the following discussion.

In-school Projects. The four in-school probjects have served an interesting sample of youths. The majority of the youths in these programs were 16-17 years old, but there were also a number of younger (14-15 year olds) and older (18-19 year old) participants (See Table 1). The YNPS data suggest that the younger the participants, the more likely the youths were unable to find utility in the work experience component of the program in terms of learning career skills or participating in career explorations. This was explained as follows: because younger youths did not have career interests, they joined primarily to receive pay. The 16-17 year old youth population was more likely to see the utility of work experience and, found utility in career counseling, job employment skills and job placements. The older participants, 18-21 years old, were most likely to have concrete career plans and hence well benefited from work experience in a chosen field.

The youths who were attracted to the in-school programs came primarily from referrals through the school system. This means of referral impacted on the educational achievement level of the participants in the program, as the sample of in-school youth participants contained few dropouts who sought to return. Because program information was disseminated through the school system, few youth who were out of school had the opportunity to learn of the program.

TABLE 1

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS BY PROGRAMMATIC MODEL*

Participant Characteristics	Public non-profit #	%	In-school #	%	Alternative school #	%	Post-secondary #	%
Age:								
14-15	5	10.6	75	15.2	52	30.6	4	3.3
16-17	35	74.5	320	64.8	98	57.6	30	24.6
18-19	7	14.9	91	18.4	19	11.2	50	41.0
20-21	0	0	8	1.6	1	.6	38	31.1
Educational Status:								
High school student	46	97.9	396	80.2	170	100.0	48	39.3
High school dropout	1	2.1	9	1.8	0	0	23	18.9
High school completed/ Post high school	0	0	89	18.0	0	0	51	41.8
Total	47	100.0%	494	100.0%	170	100.0%	122	100.0%

*Source: Blackstone Institute MIS Reports, 6/14/79

The in-school projects enrolled youths currently in the sponsoring public school. They were of two types: those who were failing in the public schools and those who had a "C" or better school average. The former group was composed of youth whom the school system had "negatively creamed" into the project; i.e. they were troublemakers and/or failing in the regular school curriculum. Teachers or guidance counselors then deposited them in the programs. The other group of youths, those who had been passing their coursework, joined the in-school projects to earn pay or to learn something "practical". That these two youth populations were enrolled in the same program at several of the in-school projects had disruptive consequences in classes and posed behavioral as well as curriculum design problems for the program staff. The "higher" achievers were bored with the project material, whereas the "lower" achievers experienced difficulties with the same material.

Alternative Schools. Unlike the in-school youth population, the alternative school participants came from similar educational achievement backgrounds. The majority had, or were in the process of, flunking out of public schools. Because the participants had similar educational needs (i.e. remedial education) the programs were potentially more utilitarian for the participants. Project staff were able to design programming which was most beneficial to a majority of participants. The in-school projects had problems in this area because the unstructured classes, independent tutoring and study components which seemed to work best for this group alienated the "higher" achievers and promoted behavioral problems in classroom settings.

The YETP programs at the alternative schools have been primarily work placements for youths to earn money. The other components of the

program, such as learning career skills, have been secondary. This impacts on the utility of the programs in the alternative school settings. The employment skill and remedial education needs of the youth have been addressed through the alternative schools curriculum in general rather than through the funded project per se. Interviewed participants were, on the whole, happy with their school experiences, but the data suggest they were getting the support and encouragement they needed regardless of the YETP project.

Post-secondary Projects. Over seventy percent of the youths enrolled in the two post-secondary projects were over 18 years old. These participants, because of their age, had made decisions as to what they wished to accomplish in the near future. As such, they were articulate and able to take advantage of the opportunities the programs offered them. The programs had utility for them based on the fact that they decided what they wanted to do and then chose the project as the best means for them to accomplish their goals. As they were goal directed towards receiving a post-secondary education, their attention was focused on learning and scholastic achievement.

Public Non-profit Projects. The two public nonprofit projects have served primarily a 16 to 17 year old youth population. The special component of these projects, aside from their offering education outside the traditional school setting, has been their work experience placements. One project provided youths with on-the-job training in the field of agriculture and forestry related skills, were as the other has placed youths only in energy related field jobs. Both projects provide career exploration and work experiences in their specific employment fields.

Interim Report #2 identified the youth population of 16 to 17 year olds as usually not having concrete career plans. Thus these projects may have particular utility for several reasons. Foremost, it provides the youth participants with an intensive exploration of one career field, and provides them with experiences helpful to their learning of basic employment skills. Because the two career fields in which these projects provide training and experience are highly technical, it provided a useful means for the project staffs to tie their work experience placements into academic knowledge. Both fields require math, which promoted the tying of basic skills into work experience-related learning. The drawback of placing youths in one specific field at each project was that it precluded career exploration in other fields. In Interim Report #2 youths between sixteen and seventeen years old did not feel the need to chose a specific career field for themselves; but the utility of exposure of this youth population to other fields has not been explored. Therefore, the strengths and limitations of this model needs to be explored further.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The Academic Credit for Work Experiences Projects devised and implemented a number of program strategies and activities to help economically handicapped youths stay in school and prepare them for future permanent employment. Table 2 below provides a matrix of the possible combinations of settings and activities. The table should be considered speculative as further exploration and analysis is needed.

In-school projects. During the first year of operation, all four new in-school projects experienced difficulty working with the sponsoring school system in awarding basic skills (i.e. English, Math, Science) credit to their participants. During the 1978-1979 academic year,

TABLE 2

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES OFFERED TO YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

Program Setting	Academic Credit		Experience Credit		Classroom Activities			Length of Work Placement	
	Basic Skills	Elective	In-class	Work	Employment Job Skills	Career Exploration	Remedial Education	Rotation	Semi-Permanent
Traditional In-school:									
Project 1		x		x	x				x
Project 2	x	(x)[1]	x		x	x	x		x
Project 3	(x)[1]	x	x		x	x	x	x	
Project 4	x	(x)[1]	x		x	x	x		x
Alternative School:									
Project 5	x	(x)[1]	x	(x)[1]	x	x			x
Project 6	x	(x)[1]	x	(x)[1]					x
Postsecondary:									
Project 7	(x)[1]	x	x				x		x
Project 8		x	x			x	x	x	
Public Nonprofit:									
Project 9	x	(x)[1]	x	(x)[1]		(x)[2]			x
Project 10		x		x	x	(x)[2]			x

[1] secondary

[2] career exploration in one field

three of the projects were able to grant basic skills credit. However, this was primarily on an individual-by-individual basis where project staff negotiated with school system personnel to award credit. Inconsistancies were evident at several projects where participants had been given elective credit while they thought they were going to receive basic skills credit.

Most of the credit that was awarded to participants was acquired through participation in classroom activities and completion of written assignments. Where credit was awarded for work experience, it was based on a written contract of competencies. Only one project appeared to be granting credit for strictly on-the-job experience. Projects began redefining and systematizing their credit arrangements during the second semester. In particular, employer supervisors may begin to play a larger role in the analysis of youth's acquired competencies. This, in the past, had been almost the sole responsibility of the project staff.

The credit acquired and measured through classroom activities was most often from employment skills classes. In these settings participants learned how to interview, fill out application forms, and other job seeking skills. Projects often found that participants were unable to accomplish these tasks because they lacked basic educational and interpersonal skills. To help these participants, projects instituted remedial education curriculas in the classroom. A basic goal was to bring basic skills up to a level where the youth could fill out an application form on their own. As noted earlier, the participants who did not need these sessions were bored with this program component, whereas those who needed it most did not like the traditional emphasis on classroom instruction. The employment skills classes and career awareness programming were felt to

be practical by the participants under seventeen years old who did not have career plans and had not been exposed to the requirements of the "work world" before.

Career exploration or job placement rotation appears to be occurring at one project consistently, whereas the other three projects have attempted to place the participants at one job site semi-permanently (i.e. six months). The data suggest that placement rotation had both negative and positive repercussions for the participants. It is positive in that youth acquired exposure to a number of different career fields and skill levels of jobs. (It was also helpful when a participant disliked their placements as they were soon able to change sites.) The rotation was negative in that participants were constantly "uprooted" and did not have a chance to stabilize in their job placements. They seldom established a rapport with the other employees and supervisor(s). Where job placements were semi-permanent, participants often on their own would shift placements because, for one reason or another, the placement was not considered appropriate by them. For participants who did have a specific career field interest and liked their placement, a semi-permanent position was advantageous for them. The trade-offs between job rotation and semi-permanent placement need to be further explored.

Alternative Schools. The alternative schools did not experience the same kind of problems awarding basic skills credit as in-school programs. This was because they negotiated with the state rather than with the local LEA. Another benefit to these programs was that they had been in operation for a number of years and had hence worked out many of the credit problems the new in-school programs were experiencing.

One of the alternative schools had been conducting job skills and career exploration classes and had experienced the same problem the

in-school programs had in terms of the remedial education needs of the participants. This program provided remedial education to the participants but tended to rely on the youth's regular classes to work on these needs of the participants. This not always proved satisfactory. Participants were in many cases, still unable to fill out application forms on their own. The educationally handicapped participants posed problems for both the alternative school and in-school projects, but the flexibility of the alternative school approach allowed greater latitude in the structure of teaching remedial education. This appeared to have occurred because the alternative schools had integrated their projects into their regular school curriculum and did not have traditional or rigid school system with which to contend.

Alternative schools, like the in-school programs, appeared to structure their award of credit on classroom performance and written tasks, but they tended to incorporate the work experience more closely into their curriculum. This incorporation was, in part, based on competencies acquired by youth, but also based very strongly on job attendance. If participants missed or were late to their job, a system of docking them pay and credit came into effect. This strategy increased job and class attendance, but it was not evident how this system affected the development of work competency.

Post-secondary Projects. The two post-secondary projects jointly have enrolled under thirty participants. Because enrollments are low for the projects, the services offered to participants have been individualized to meet each participant's academic and work experience needs. The projects have offered elective credit in the sense that the credit was awarded for the regular course listings (many of which were

work-study or independent courses). Participants enrolled in the post-secondary insitutions received tutoring and counseling from the project so as to pass the colleges' course requirements. Both projects stressed the academic portion of the program over the work experience component, which is what the participants most desired. Exploration of careers and appropriate work experience placements was secondary to both the staff and participants. The utility of these projects was the prospect of a college degree and the money earned to support the participants while they were enrolled in school.

Public non-profit Projects. The two public non-profit projects differed in the areas where they could grant credit. One project was an alternative school where they were given permission by the local LEA to grant academic credit in all subject areas. The other project was refused permission by the local LEA to grant academic credit to the participants in the basic skills areas and hence could only grant elective credits. This latter project developed concise learning contracts encompassing basic skills acquisition and has continued to relate the work experience to academic subject learning despite their inability to grant basic skills credits.

Of all the academic credit projects currently operating, this project has consistently worked the hardest to improve the relationship between work experience and "academic" knowledge. And while they cannot give basic skills credit, they present a key example of the development of formal education learned through work experience. The former project had not developed as strong a tie between work experience and basic skills knowledge. Because of this, participants at the former project valued and appeared to gain more from their work experiences.

The one project which could not grant basic skills credit was at a disadvantage as participants, because they could not receive basic education credits, tended to perceive the work experience component of the project strictly in terms of financial subsidization. The students were also not able to earn as many credits for their work experience as the local LEA's vocational education program, which annoyed some participants and made it harder for the project to function at its optimum level.

While these two projects offered participants a means to learn basic skills from their work experiences, they did not offer participants the opportunity to explore different career fields. For the student population enrolled in these programs, primarily youths aged 16-17 years old, this may not have presented a disadvantage. Given that youth in this age cohert usually do not have career plans, they may benefit the most from learning basic employment skills from their on the job training experiences.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The social organization of the Academic Credit projects is complex. The organizational factors which affect participants' experiences include 1) staffing, 2) LEA involvement and 3) program setting. Staffing encompasses student-staff ratios as they affect the quantity of staff time available to participants, and also the quality of the student-staff relationships. The amount and level of LEA involvement with the project has repurcussions on the participants in terms of the amount and type of credit awarded. LEA involvement impacts on project staff, particularly for the in-school projects, in terms of which youth can participate, procedures to obtain supplies and space, and programming (i.e. granting credits). Program setting impacts on academic credit arrangements and the participants' learning environment. These organizational qualities

of the programs are intercorrelated in their impacts and can change over time. As projects begin their second year of operation (1979-1980), their relationships with the LEA have tended to improve, programming and curricula have stabilized, and staff experience has increased.

In-school Projects. The in-school projects have achieved the most cooperation and support from the educational system. Where they have experienced difficulty in communicating with and receiving the support of the LEA, the projects encountered difficulties implementing their projects. Negotiation with the LEA appears to be on-going with regard to who can participate in the programs and in what areas credit may be granted. Basic skills credit cannot be granted at one project, but at the other three projects is occurring on an individual student by student basis. Incorporating the projects into the school system has taken considerable time because school staff have been politically hesitant to become involved in granting academic credit for work experience. The school system staff are grateful to have a "depository" for their disenfranchized youth, but at the same time are concerned about having projects which are not totally under their control.

The organizational factor which most affected the utility of these projects was the learning environment. The in-school project environment was similar to the public traditional school model where participants sat at desks in the same classroom for a specified period of time every day or every other day, and left class at the sound of a bell. This imposed physical and time structure corresponded to the same school environment in which many of the youths were not successful in the past. In comparison to the other projects, this atmosphere did not appear to be condusive to helping the participants overcome behvavioral and educational problems.

The student-staff ratio at these projects was (compared to traditional schools) low. Despite the low student-staff ratios, which was utilitarian in helping youths with educational problems, a close relationship between the youths and staffs did not develop consistantly across the projects. This may in part have been because the relationship was structured on a student-teacher model which tended to alienate already disenfranchized youth. Participants who had academically performed satisfactorily in the past did not have problems with this type of staff contact, and in fact preferred it. A traditional school atmosphere appeared to work best for those who had been successful in this environment previously, and to have detrimental affects on those who had previously doon poortly.

Alternative Schools. The alternative schools did not experience the youth alienation problems that the in-school programs did. This may be true in part because the alternative schools have been structured to meet the needs of educationally handicapped youths, both in programming and staff attitudes. All students came from a similar educational background and had remedial education needs. The tangible reasons why the youth in the alternative schools performed well are not necessarily self evident. Both educational approaches (traditional and alternative) were utilized at the alternative school. They also had the same or higher student-staff ratios, taught classes in a similar manner (i.e. both structured and unstructured classes) and physically conducted school class in a similar manner. Possibly the youths were more motivated to succeed academically than the in-school program youth because the alternative schools were perceived to be their last chance to complete school and many youths had self-referred themselves to the schools.

Another advantage of the alternative schools in comparison to the in-school projects was that they did not have to negotiate with an LEA. For these schools, credit negotiations and communications regarding programming were accomplished through the state educational system. Therefore their curriculum and activities tended to be protected from local pressures.

Post-secondary Projects. The two post-secondary projects were organized as support services to help participants matriculate at the college level. They had low staff-youth ratios and hence were able to closely supervise and tutor participants. Their relationships were based on guidance and support, which the participants needed and appreciated.

The post-secondary projects initial relationships with the college's administration were strained. One project had difficulty getting credit for participants for their work experiences, and the other project was experiencing difficulty in getting youth enrolled in the project. The problems at the one project with granting credit do not appear to have been resolved, and the project has had to modify its credit plans. Both projects, to meet the academic demands of the colleges, have had to engage in extensive tutoring of participants. The one postsecondary project which has been physically located at the college has been able more quickly and positively to resolve its differences with the college administration than the other project which has been located off campus. In this situation, proximity to the sponsoring educational agency has expediated the solution of problems.

Public Nonprofit Projects. Organizationally, the two nonprofit projects were very different. One was structured as an alternative school,

but worked closely with the LEA. The other public nonprofit project was a self-contained project offering minimal classroom instruction. Organizationally they were similar in that they were structured to prepare participants to meet the employment demands of two particular career fields. Because the two projects were organized around a specific career field, they have been categorized together for this analysis. To date, the alternative school model nonprofit project has not supplied much data on the social organization of its project, so the following discussion is based on the self-contained project.

The low youth-staff ratio and teacher/counselor role of the staff at the self contained project has fostered a close and satisfying relationship for both parties. Participants have been closely supervised on their work placements which greatly enhanced the work placements as learning experiences. From the close contact and supervision of participants, youth seemed to have acquired many employment related interpersonal skills. The project's environment has been condusive to and has promoted good working relationships between the staff and youths. In terms of positive and useful acquisition of employment and interpersonal skills by youth, this project's staff's relationship to youths has been the most successful across the academic credit projects.

The relationship between the project and the LEA has not been satisfactory in terms of allowing the project to grant basic skills credit. Like the in-school project relationship with their LEA, this projects'LEA is distrustful both of the concept of academic credit for work experience and allowing credit to be awarded at a project which they perceive to be out of their jurisdiction and direct control.

CONCLUSION

The Academic Credit for Work Experience projects have employed a number of different strategies to help meet the employment and educational needs of economically handicapped youths. Based on the physical location of the academic credit project, services have been delivered differentially to the participants. By project model, programs have varied on the type of participant served, staff-student ratios, and level and type of programming offered. There have also been differences on the type of relationship established and fostered between project staff and participants at the different project locations. LEA involvement with and support of projects has also been found to vary among the project models and to affect the type of services available to youths and their manner of delivery.